

SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST:

- Hometown Heroes Fund
- KVH Update
- KSH Update
- New Faces in Veteran Services
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- Upcoming Events

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KCVAO Quarterly

WINTER 2015

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

Kansas Hometown Heroes Fund

The Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office had another successful year, thanks in part to the generous support of Kansas citizens who made donations to a new Kansas state income tax check-off program, the Kansas Hometown Heroes Fund. Last year donations were once again at a sustainable level of just over \$36,500 designated for the Hometown Hero's Fund which marked a good second year for the Kansas Hometown Heroes Fund. Thanks to the generosity of Kansas citizens our veterans are being better served by the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office (KCVAO) Veteran Services program.



Now that Kansans are once again getting ready to start thinking about tax preparation season, the KCVAO would like to encourage Kansans to once again remember the Kansas Hometown Heroes Fund when filing their state income tax returns. All moneys deposited in the fund are required to be used solely for the Veteran Services Program of the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office, and are used to assist veterans, their dependents, and survivors in filing for the benefits they have earned and deserve.

Last year was the second year for the check off and through the generosity of almost 3,000 citizens at tax time; new opportunities are being made possible to provide support and advocacy to Kansas veterans. When these Kansans filed their income taxes last year many, saw the new check off and elected to donate to the Kansas Hometown Heroes Fund.

The state's check-off program is an easy way for Kansans to support veterans and to know hundred percent of the donation will go to the intended use. Contributions of only a few dollars can help veterans in receiving thousands of dollars in benefits they have earned and deserve.

"It is hoped the check off program will continue to build on a great first year as more Kansans become aware of it," states Wayne Bollig, the Deputy Director of Veteran Services. "On behalf of all Kansas Veterans, we want to thank those Kansas citizens that have donated and those that plan to donate to the fund."



Kansans can donate all or part of their state income tax refund by checking the appropriate boxes on the state tax return form for the amount they wish to donate to the program. Taxpayers not eligible to receive a refund but still wishing to donate may send a check to the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office, Home Town Hero's Fund, 700 SW Jackson, Jayhawk Towers, Suite 1004, Topeka, KS 66603.

Kansas Veterans' Home

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2014 American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop at Kansas Veterans' Home

The 2014 KVH Gift Shop kicked off with a ribbon cutting ceremony on December 2. Department and District officers and area members came together to allow residents to 'shop' for loved ones. Gifts are chosen, wrapped and shipped at no cost to the resident or KVH thanks to the donations and hard work of Legion volunteers. KVH ALA Representative Dorothy Malone, with assistance from Deputy Representatives Pam King and Claudia Satterlee, coordinated this year's event. Special thanks to Winfield area Soroptimists and Elks for supporting the project by providing lunches for volunteers.



Arkansas City American Legion Guest



On November 22 members of American Legion Post 18 and its Auxiliary, Legion Riders and Sons of the American Legion units visited KVH. Along with time visiting units and presenting donations to Kansas Veterans' Home Clinical Director Bruce Irwin, they hosted a special weekend BINGO session for residents. Donations included over \$500 in items for the KVH Clothing Room from the Post 18 SAL and a new popcorn popper from the Post 18 Legion Riders.

Kansas Veterans' Home - Continued

Snyder Foundation gift to KVH

The HL Snyder Foundation recognized the Kansas Veterans' Home in 2014 with \$4500 to purchase three defibrillators for use throughout the facility. Recent changes in regulations regarding emergency readiness mean nursing homes must be prepared should use of CPR or a defibrillator be necessary. With the purchase of this equipment, the Kansas Veterans' Home is much better prepared to handle a crisis of this type.

This is the Snyder Foundation's third gift to the Kansas Veterans' Home. Equipment purchases the organization has supported in the past were a recumbent stationary bike and an e-stim machine to promote options in physical and occupational therapies for residents.



Fort Riley Soldiers Visit KVH

Five members of the US Army Band at Fort Riley visited the Kansas Veterans' Home on January 13. The brass quintet played a selection of big band classics for residents and staff. The full band from Fort Riley includes about 40 soldiers. Other members of the band are currently deployed to entertain troops all over the world. Prior to the performance, the soldiers had an opportunity to meet with residents over lunch.



Kansas Veterans' Home - Continued

National American Legion Auxiliary President Visit KVH

The National American Legion Auxiliary President Janet Jefford visited the Kansas Veterans' Home during her tour of the state in November. President Jefford met with residents and toured the facility then had lunch in Winfield with Post 10 President Pixie Black and KVH Representative Dorothy Malone, Department President Tonia Ison, Department Vice Commander Ray Vail and Linda Vail. During the visit Ms. Malone was presented with a contribution towards the 2014 American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop at KVH from Department President Ison.



For Information on Admission and Eligibility for Kansas Veterans Home and the Kansas Soldiers' Home click on link below.

[Admission and Eligibility](#)

For more information about each nursing home click on link below

[Soldiers' Home](#)

[Veterans' Home](#)

Kansas Soldiers' Home

American GI Forum Shares Lincoln Hall Christmas Cheer for Six Years

Henry Sanchez, brother of KSH resident Fred Sanchez, led a group of holiday elves who made veterans at Lincoln Hall feel special this Christmas season. This year they were able to present each resident a \$50 gift card to a local business from moneys received through fund-raisers. Food and entertainment were provided by staff and friendly competition between staff members were enjoyed by all. Several residents said, "Of all the Christmas parties they had attended, this one provided the most laughs." Superintendent Hilmes, who competed quite poorly in head-to-head competition with staff, noted that he was happy to oblige and thought everyone was laughing with and not at him!...think again Scott.



Dodge City Women's Chamber Presented \$250 grant to KSH

The \$250 grant to the KSH for shelving units to be used in the KSH surplus store. The Resident Benefit Fund Committee voted to match the grant with another \$250. Resident volunteers sort, clean, repair and display donated items. As the donations kept coming, the store recently moved into a larger building known as Nimitz Hall. Each room in Nimitz Hall is specific to categories and everything is free to veterans.



Zoa Rowilson, Marilyn Roberts, Evelyn Israel, and Eldana Travis receiving the grant

Kansas Soldiers' Home - Continued

Christmas Generosity Overwhelming Success at the KSH

There were happy faces and presents under the trees this Christmas as Kansas Soldiers' Home (KSH) veterans compliments of local church groups, veterans groups and state agencies. They provided Christmas carolling, gifts, snacks and food for the veterans. Superintendent Hilmes thanked all volunteer groups for their generosity and for showing everyone the true meaning of giving during these holiday seasons.



The KSH Veterans would like to thank GI Forum, Heaven Bound Cowboy Church, Boot Hill Casino and American Legion Post 47 for their continued commitment to veterans.



Veterans Services Update

New Faces in Veteran Services

Many companies and businesses routinely state that their most important assets are their workers. This not only holds true for the KCVAO Veteran Services Program but without the dedicated group of people that strive to help all the veterans and family members who walk through their doors, Veteran Services would not be where we are today, a highly efficient cadre of veterans advocates. We have a few more VSR's that have come on board since our last newsletter and would like to introduce them now.



Doug Storie has been hired as the second veteran services representative (VSR) in the Hays Field Office. He is a Navy veteran of 20 years who originally hails from the state of Illinois. His assignments took him all over the world as an avionics technician on the P-3 Orion and H-60 Seahawk. Doug also molded young minds as an aircraft radar systems instructor. He holds an education degree from Adams State University in Colorado where he lived for a short time after retiring from the military. Doug and his wife Lourdes have three sons who are serving in the Navy, Marines, and Air National Guard respectively. When he is not at work, he is a history buff and enjoys researching his family lineage and

how they fit into American and world history. Doug enjoys speaking with, learning, and sharing common experiences with all the veterans he helps. Doug has felt a calling to pay back those who came before him in the service of our nation.

Jayson Massey is our new Mobile VSR assigned to the Emporia mobile office. Jayson was born in Munich Germany while his father was a special agent in the US Army. The Massey family eventually returned to Kansas to the Topeka area where Jayson attended high school at Washburn Rural. He holds a History degree from Baker University and completed his Community College of the Air Force Applied Science degree while in the US Air Force. Jayson worked as an aircraft armament systems specialist while on active duty and an HVAC Technician and Medical Administration Specialist during his time with the Kansas Air National Guard. He has two forward deployments to Kuwait under his belt.



When Jayson is not busy at home with his wife Erin and daughter Alexandra, he is the Commander of the local American Legion Post in Lyndon as well as being active in other civic organizations. The family does enjoy hiking and camping when they can fit it into their busy schedule. Jayson has a true desire to further his knowledge when it comes to veterans benefits and uses that knowledge to help all veterans he comes in contact with.

Veterans Services Update - Continued

New Faces in Veteran Services



Kevin Diers came on board with the KCVAO as the other Mobile VSR in the Emporia Mobile Office. He is a Kansan through and through born in Concordia where he attended high school. Like many military members, Kevin has a litany of colleges and universities that he attended including, Baker University, Cochise College, University of Maryland, and Cloud County Community College. Before he started his career with the KCVAO, Kevin was an Intelligence NCO with the 2/130 FA Kansas Army National Guard. His deployments took him overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and resulted in his helping to establish the first fusion center for AFRICOM. Kevin is married to Stacey and they have one child, Ostin. He is kept busy with his family as well as raising livestock and riding his motorcycles. Kevin is an active member of the local American Legion post. He really enjoys discussing and listening to all the veterans stories and he wants to make a positive impact on the people's lives of our great state.

Craig Foster is assigned to the Hays Mobile Office as one of the mobile VSR's. He was born and raised in Southwest Kansas where he attended high school in Ashland. Craig's military adventures consisted of becoming a Seabee in the Navy Reserves where he was called to active duty and deployed in support of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Craig is passionate about his hobby as a photographer and you may see him out and about with his camera all over the state. His affinity of films and music is surpassed only by his passion for helping the veterans he comes in contact with during his mobile visits. Making a difference in people's lives is important to Craig as he begins his new journey with the KCVAO.



Please extend a warm welcome if you happen to meander into the office of one of our four newest VSR's.

Veteran Services Office Locations—[Website](#)

Mobile Service Offices Coming to a Town Near You—[Website](#)

The Kansas Enhanced Veteran Services Program makes applying for V.A. benefits more accessible to State veterans and eligible family members. The fully equipped and handicapped accessible "offices on wheels" can setup shop at designated locations in your community or attend special events such as fairs, parades, and festivals throughout the State of Kansas.

Wreaths Across America

Seven ceremonial wreaths were placed to remember those who gave their lives in service for our country. Specially made wreaths for Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and POW/MIA were placed by representatives from each branch of service during the ceremony. These specially made wreaths are donated by Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington, Maine.



Kansas Veterans Cemetery at WaKeeney



Kansas Veterans' Cemetery At WaKeeney

Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Fort Dodge



Wreaths Across America—Continued

Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Fort Riley

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Wreaths Across America—Continued

Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Winfield

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Due to the generosity of our families and communities, we collected enough donations through Wreaths Across America to have wreaths for all of those interred at our Cemeteries. We thank each of you who helped to make this possible.

Upcoming Events

Kansas Veterans' Home

February

- 19 - KVH Residents—Southwestern College
Basket Game
- 24 - KVH Residents— “Fury on the Plains”

April

- 3 - KVH Annual Good Friday Brunch at
Trimmerman Hall
- 3 - KVH Annual Egg Hunt at Bleckley Hall
- 23 - KVH Annual Volunteer Recognition
Ceremony

Kansas Soldiers' Home

February

- 21 - Dinner Event for Western KS Gold Star
Families—Guest speaker Senator Pat Roberts
(Sponsored by LULAC)

March

- 28 - Junior American Citizens Award Banquet
(Sponsored by Daughters of the American
Revolution)

April

- 10 - 150th Anniversary of FT. Dodge

The Mobile Delivery Program Office Schedule

Event	Dates	Dates	Hours	Hours	Location	City
Mobile Outreach	Feb 24	Feb 24	10:00 AM	6:00 PM	Walmart	Pittsburg
Mobile Outreach	Feb 25	Feb 25	9:00 AM	5:00 PM	Walmart	Ft. Scott
Mobile Outreach	Feb 26	Feb 26	9:00 AM	5:00 PM	Community Center	Columbus
Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting	Mar 8	Mar 8	1:00 PM	3:00 PM	Prairie Band Casino	Mayetta
Mobile Outreach	Mar 10	Mar 10	9:30 AM	5:00 PM	Walmart	Newton
Mobile Outreach	Mar 10	Mar 10	9:00 AM	4:00 PM	Dollar General	Oberlin
Mobile Outreach	Mar 11	Mar 11	10:00 AM	2:00 PM	Dole Comm. Center	McConnell AFB
Mobile Outreach	Mar 11	Mar 11	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	Walmart	Goodland
Mobile Outreach	Mar 12	Mar 12	9:00 AM	5:00 PM	White's Grocery	Kingman
Mobile Outreach	Mar 12	Mar 12	8:00 AM	2:30 PM	Walmart	Goodland
Mobile Outreach	Mar 23	Mar 23	10:00 AM	5:00 PM	Walmart	Ark City
Mobile Outreach	Mar 24	Mar 24	9:00 AM	5:00 PM	Walmart	Wellington
Mobile Outreach	Mar 24	Mar 24	9:00 AM	4:00 PM	Dollar General	Hoxie
Mobile Outreach	Mar 25	Mar 25	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	Dollar General	Anthony
Mobile Outreach	Mar 26	Mar 26	9:00 AM	4:00 PM	Dollar General	Phillipsburg

Military Veterans Project

Mission

To advocate, educate and honor our Military Veterans & families through program support.

The Military Veteran Project has assisted veterans & service members with medical advocacy, peer-to-peer support, post-traumatic stress disorder treatments and assisted in suicide prevention. Educated military spouses, military families and the community on reintegration, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, and financial planning honored military veterans by assisting families with burial support and ensuring that all military veterans are buried with full honors. Remember 100% of your donation goes directly to the cause, your donation will make a difference and we need your help to assist more veterans daily.

Your donation and support helped create the numbers below:

1,283 Veterans
462 Military Families
132 Active duty single soldiers
12 War widows
4 Gold Star families

Get Involved - Volunteer - Donate

<http://www.militaryveteranproject.org/index.html>



Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs Office

700 SW Jackson, Suite 1004
Topeka, KS 66603
Phone: 785-296-3976
Fax: 785-296-1462
Website: <http://kcva.ks.gov/>



SPECIAL NOTICE:

If you are a veteran in emotional crisis and need help RIGHT NOW, call this toll-free number **1-800-273-8255**, available 24/7, and tell them you are a veteran. All calls are confidential.